



State Fire Marshal Monthly Report to the California Fire Prevention Officers



**Kate Dargan
State Fire Marshal**

Fire Protection Partners:

As we wrap the summer here in Sacramento, the big news is still the budget issues that are unresolved for the state. Today's column is not about my fiscal issues though, it is about yours. Fire service personnel from around the state are sharing with me their local stories about the budget pinch back home - the service evaluations, the internal struggles within a city for public safety costs versus other community needs, and the debate over the cost and benefit of prevention and mitigation as part of our public safety system.

This is not a new issue for the long-time fire professionals in California. As budgets move in their cyclic patterns, there are years when we make gains in dedicated funding for community safety education, inspections and mitigation staff, integrated information systems, code development and better plan review. Then there are years when those hard-won programs are rolled back as dollars grow scarce and fire prevention budgets are some of the first to be considered

for reductions. These are tough calls for fire chiefs and fire marshals who understand that community fire safety is part of an integrated system that includes planning, prevention, mitigation, and response.

We have been measuring fire department level-of-service for several years now. Tools are gradually being developed to evaluate and demonstrate to our communities the service we provide, although these tools have thus far been primarily pointed at the fire suppression metrics such as standards of cover. And this is where fire prevention, or perhaps better termed "fire protection", metrics come in. The emerging need is for fire chiefs to be able to measure all aspects of the fire protection system - how well does planning integrate with operational need, how does prevention reduce response needs, how does built-in fire protection change the manual fire suppression task, how many inspections does it take to equal one foundation save, how does a vibrant prevention program support both community and responder safety? In short, how do we in fact prove that an ounce of prevention was indeed worth a pound of cure?

The answers to these questions are just being asked around the country today and I wish I had a definitive guideline to help you with the answers. What I can support you with today is encouragement to raise these issues as part of the budget education and decision process. Support our organizations such as NFPA, I-Chiefs, and Cal Chiefs - Fire Prevention Offices that are trying to develop real measuring tools for a bigger picture look at fire safety. Even when dollars are tight continue to send your prevention staff to conferences, training, and meetings. The networking has real benefit to your jurisdiction as the concept of integrated fire protection planning develops and spreads. Send them with your own needs so we can hear what they are and, over time, develop the solutions that your current "rising stars" will one day use when they are Chief and facing their inevitable budget pressures.

As always your Partner in Prevention,

Kate

Action Packed Poster

The CAL FIRE Public Education Unit recently released this beautiful 20"x23" poster depicting the hard work and heroic deeds of the fine folks of CAL FIRE. You will notice SFM personnel prominently featured while on the job. This poster reminds us of the myriad responsibilities of our organization. From wildfire to structure fires, medical aids to hazmat, natural resource protection to law enforcement, search and rescue to code enforcement, and more. If you would like one, contact Daniel.berlant@fire.ca.gov



We Asked – You Suggested

When we amended our website to bring it into compliance with the administration's format, we asked our users for their opinions and suggestions. And boy did you give them...Web master Rene Barnett kept hearing "I can't find the Building Material Listings!!!" Or words to that effect. So this is what she did:



"In order to accommodate our customers, I have created a couple of links right up front. On the front page www.osfm.fire.ca.gov you will see that there is a link in the "Hot Topics" that will take you directly to the Building Material Listings page." Rene says "Also, if you hover over the tab entitled "Licensing/Listings" you will see in the blue bar directly below the tabs a link that will also take you directly to the Building Material Listings page."

We want our website to serve the needs of our customers. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) Mapping Project

Wildland fires in June and July took priority for CAL FIRE employees, causing a slowdown in the processing of the local responsibility area (LRA) fire hazard severity zone maps. As the weather moderated in August, staff returned to the mapping project. Many local jurisdictions have made change requests, reviewed the "change maps" and agree with the changes. The mapping team is processing these changes and is preparing map products for final release. Many formal recommendations are scheduled for release in September and October. It became apparent during review of the Very High FHSZ in unincorporated county jurisdictions, that several



of the parcels should be added to the State Responsibility Area (SRA) map and removed from LRA FHSZ consideration. These SRA updates are being processed.

Fire and Life Safety

Solar Panels and the Fire Service

The Solar Photovoltaic Task Group will be getting back together to look at the possibility of preparing a regulations package for Solar Photovoltaic Systems. The members of the task group that completed the "Final Draft Solar Photovoltaic Installation Guideline" will be meeting October 1, 2008.



Division Chief Vickie Sakamoto will be the Chair of the task group. Questions concerning this can be addressed to Vickie Sakamoto, Division Chief, Fire and Life Safety Division at (916) 445-8337 or vickie.sakamoto@fire.ca.gov

Just doing the job

Following is a letter from Division Chief Ernie Paez to Deputy State Fire Marshal Rick Perry:

"On August 11, 2008 this office received a letter from Commander Dwight Howard, Office of Protective Services, Lanterman Developmental Center in Pomona, commending you on your quick response to the institution's request to relocate the child day care center located on the facilities grounds due to the recent earthquake on Tuesday July 29, 2008. You received the call late Friday and responded first thing Monday morning to assist in the opening of the new center.

Rick, I personally want to thank you for representing CAL FIRE and the Office of the State Fire Marshal in a courteous and professional manner. Your demeanor in this situation helped to ensure that the children were placed expediently into their new facility and showed the public as well as our fellow state employees something that I instill in all of our Southern Deputies, which is "excellent customer service".

Thanks Rick for a job well done.

Meet Gary Blumenthal

Fire & Life Safety Division-North welcomes our newest team member, Deputy State Fire Marshal Gary Blumenthal. Gary grew up in New York City and moved to California in 1976 where he graduated from San Diego State University. He began his career with the fire service at the Camarillo State Hospital/Developmental Center in 1988 as a part-time Firefighter and went full time in 1993. Gary remained employed at the Camarillo State Hospital/Developmental Center until it closed in 1997; he then transferred to Sonoma Developmental Center where he worked as a Firefighter until he accepted this position with the Office of the State Fire Marshal. Gary is married, has a sixteen-year old daughter and a thirteen-year old son and enjoys camping, mountain biking and spending time with his family.



State Fire Training

The Training Officer Certification Training Standards (CTS) were developed using the FPA 1041 Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications 2007 Edition as the base document. This document was approved by STEAC (Statewide Training & Education Advisory Committee) in January 2007 and by SBFS (State Board of Fire Services) in August 2007. The Instructor Training Task force, assembled in November 2007, began developing the three (3) Level 1 instructor courses needed to meet the Training Instructor level in the Training Officer CTS:

Level I Certification Courses:

Training Instructor 1A: Cognitive Lesson Delivery

Training Instructor 1B: Psychomotor Lesson Delivery

The format for these two classes will change from the development of lesson Plans to the adaptation and delivering of existing lesson plans. These two classes are required for Fire Officer Certification.

Training Instructor 1C: Instructional Development Techniques

Developing and delivering both a cognitive and psychomotor lesson plan. This third class is required for Training Instructor certification or to become a State Fire Training registered instructor. Completing all three Level 1 courses still meets the community college teaching requirements.

Code Development and Analysis

The 2007 annual rulemaking cycle to create the supplement to the 2007 California Codes is nearing an end. OSFM's rulemaking packages will be heard by the Building Standards Commission (BSC) September 11, 2008. Publication date of January 1, 2009 and an effective date of July 1, 2009, have been tentatively set.

OSFM submitted revisions to the Building, Mechanical and Fire Codes:

- Rewrite of the L occupancy provisions in CBC Section 443
- Revisions to standby and emergency power systems for high-rises
- Adoption of the 2007 edition of NFPA 72 and corresponding amendments
- SFM amendments (most) in chapter 30 are proposed to be repealed as these provisions are now contained in the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) A17.1.
- Clean up of misc. provisions related to Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (RCFEs)

OSFM has been working closely with the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) during their review of the International Residential Code (IRC).

OSFM is working with NorCal and SoCal FPOs to draft regulations that would reprint provisions of Title 19 into Fire code for local enforcing agencies.

This year OSFM will be reviewing the 7A provisions for further cleanup as well as reconvening the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) committee that helped develop chapter 7A. The committee will discuss design, construction, enforcement and the prevention measures of 7A and consider further enhancements that may be necessary.

The California Building Standards Commission has been compiling an online erratum for the 2007 Edition of Title 24 which can be downloaded at: http://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/bsc/Title_24/documents/Errata/Errata080108.pdf

The California Building Code/NFPA 13 Correlation Work Group compared the 2007 edition of NFPA 13 to the current California Building Code. The Group will meet again in October to evaluate the sprinkler requirement in the building and fire codes. Once this task is complete, the Group will make recommendations to the Assistant SFM to amend, add, delete and/or move to adopt the 2007 edition of NFPA 13 and/or make amendments to the California Building and Fire Codes.

CAL FIRE Office of the State Fire Marshal

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